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## Syracuse University School of Architecture Lecture Poster - Spring 1984

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### Recommended Citation

Architecture, Syracuse, "Syracuse University School of Architecture Lecture Poster - Spring 1984" (1984).  
*School of Architecture Lectures Series*. 84.  
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# WILLIAM LESCAZE

## THE RISE OF MODERN DESIGN IN AMERICA



# SYMPOSIUM

FEBRUARY 15-16, 1984

PROGRAM

This two-day event will place Lescaze's career into the context of design practice, the American cultural environment, and contemporary worldwide art movements. The presentations and subsequent discussion will provide fresh perspectives on major monuments such as the PSFS Building in Philadelphia, and will bring previously unknown Lescaze projects to the attention of scholars and practitioners.

The symposium will look closely at both Lescaze and his milieu. Themes related to Lescaze include his research for new forms for an industrial age, his role in introducing progressive European ideas into the United States, and his contributions in solving the functional and aesthetic problems posed by new building types.

The scope of discussion also should result in a significant contribution to the current assessment of the origins of modern architecture in America. The presentations will shed new light on the rise of the International Style, and the definition of an American conception of Modernism.

Lescaze's design work was strongly based upon the notion of "Total Design". He always sought to design total environments for his buildings including furniture, lighting fixtures, and other items. For example, his design work for the PSFS building extended from the basic structure to the graphics, pen holders, clocks, and calendars. Lescaze's fifteen-year relationship with the Columbia Broadcasting System involved him in the design of everything from a major studio facility to microphones, graphic logos, and mobile news vehicles.

In all of his work, Lescaze was committed to finding a formal vocabulary that would express the new ideas of an industrialized, machine age culture. Lescaze's work clearly parallels the progressive work of his European contemporaries, but it was subject to some novel influences in the non-political world of American practice. In fact, Lescaze's work may be seen as a unique bridge between the ideological modernism of Le Corbusier or Walter Gropius and the commercialized machine imagery of Raymond Loewy or Norman Bel Geddes.

The symposium includes two featured lectures by recognized scholars in the field of Modern Architecture and Design, presentations by four young scholars with a specialized knowledge of Lescaze, and a panel discussion with respondents. The illustrated presentations will include previously unpublished material drawn from the extensive collection of William Lescaze's papers at Syracuse University. The symposium schedule includes time for a thorough discussion of the various issues raised in the formal presentations.

Syracuse University will publish the proceedings of the symposium. This interpretive document is designed to supplement the documentary catalog already published for the exhibition.

### HOSMER AUDITORIUM EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART SYRACUSE N.Y.

WILLIAM JORDY  
Brown University

ARTHUR PULOS  
Pulos Design Associates, Inc.

ROBERT DEAN  
Curator  
Syracuse University

DENNIS DOORDAN  
Associate Curator  
Tulane University

LINDSAY SHAPIRO  
Associate Curator  
Parsons School of Design

CAROL WILLIS  
Parsons School of Design

STUART COHEN  
University of Illinois at Chicago

WERNER SELIGMANN  
Dean School of Architecture  
Syracuse University

ROBERT A.M. STERN  
Columbia University

Wednesday February 15th  
7:30 p.m.

Keynote Address

ARTHUR PULOS  
The Machine Age and William Lescaze

Reception Following

Thursday February 16th  
1:30 p.m.

Presentations by panel members

LINDSAY SHAPIRO  
William Lescaze and Hart Crane: A Bridge  
between Architecture and Poetry

CAROL WILLIS  
The "Modern" Skyscraper in 1931

DENNIS DOORDAN  
William Lescaze and CBS: A Case Study  
in Corporate Modernism

ROBERT DEAN  
European Modernism in an American  
Commercial Context

Coffee break following

3:30 p.m.

Discussion with respondents

STUART COHEN  
WERNER SELIGMANN  
ROBERT A.M. STERN

7:30 p.m.

Closing Address

WILLIAM JORDY  
William Lescaze and Modern Architecture:  
A retrospective view

For information and reservations contact:  
Syracuse University School of Architecture  
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(315) 423-2256

General admission \$4.00 Students \$2.00

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New York Council for the Humanities, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts